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ABSTRACT

The creation of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis to be located in Austria and the launching of a project which will list detailed objectives of all technical and vocational curricula (mathematics objectives have been completed) are announced. Other articles written in English discuss student evaluation; pre-school, upper secondary, comprehensive, and higher education; and governmental and international educational organizations. Five articles are written in French. (T)

NEWS-LETTER
FAITS NOUVEAUX

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CONTENTS : SOMMAIRE

Page

PART ONE : GENERAL/PREMIERE PARTIE : GENERALITES

International institute for applied systems analysis/Changer le rapport éducatif et l'institution scolaire 3

PART TWO : MEMBER COUNTRIES/DEUXIEME PARTIE : PAYS MEMBRES

Austria : Bank of teaching objectives for technical and vocational education 6

Belgique : Révision de la politique universitaire 7

Denmark : The end of examinations 8

Espagne : Création d'un enseignement universitaire à distance et de nouvelles universités 9

Finland : Objectives for upper secondary reform 10

France : La rentrée, le budget et les priorités/Education du groupe d'âge 16-19 ans - Recherches et réflexions 11

Federal Republic of Germany : Convention on admission to higher education/Regional educational centres proposed 13

Ireland : Young school leavers 16

Italie : La réforme au début de l'année scolaire 1972/1973 17

Malta : An advisory European committee of education 19

Netherlands : Educational policies of the new government 20

Scandinavia : A new organisation for educational and cultural co-operation 20

Sweden : Reform of pre-school education/Situation and prospects of upper secondary education 22

United Kingdom : Educational priority areas/A university under scrutiny/Slowing down in the move towards comprehensive education/Extending the Open University's range/Absence from school/University libraries 23

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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

A major event in the history of science occured in October - but got only a few lines in the daily papers. On the initiative of the National Academy of Science of the USA and the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, an agreement was reached by the scientific organisations of twelve countries and signed in London on October 4, 1972, to create the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.

The Institute will be devoted to research and development in those domains which are of crucial importance to the future development of modern society. It will apply investigation and planning methods of operations research, cybernetics, management techniques and systems analysis in a broad sense. Peace research to prepare and follow up the SALT discussions and the limits-to-growth problems will be amongst its subjects. The Institute will also play a role in co-ordinating corresponding activities of its member organisations.

The treaty was signed on behalf of the scientific organisations of the USA, the USSR, the United Kingdom (Royal Society), France, the Federal Republic of Germany (Max-Planck-Society), the German Democratic Republic, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Japan and Canada. The Soviet scientist Professor J. GVISCHIANI was nominated Chairman of the Governing Board and Professor H. RAIFFA, Harvard University, Director of the Institute.

It will be located as from 1974 in Laxenburg Castle near Vienna, which has been offered by the Austrian Government, but will begin its activities in the next few months using provisional facilities. Eighty scientists will work at Laxenburg and the annual budget will be approximately 30 million DM, of which two thirds will be borne by the American and Soviet academies, and the rest by the other member organisations.

001, 83 (100) Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 11-X-1972

CHANGER LE RAPPORT EDUCATIF ET L'INSTITUTION SCOLAIRE

Le "Rapport de la Commission d'études sur la fonction enseignante dans le second degré" vient d'être publié (La Documentation Française, Paris, 1972, 146 p.). Nous en avions résumé les recommandations (cf. Newsletter/Faits nouveaux 3/72). Le rapport, connu sous le nom du président de la Commission, M. L. JOXE, nous semble exprimer les idées directrices qui unissent l'Europe pédagogique. Voici des extraits des chapitres "Le diagnostic" et "Les Orientations".

I.

Les auteurs de ce rapport ont mis un accent tout particulier sur ce qu'ils nomment la "relation pédagogique". Celle-ci, pour eux, se situe au centre de leurs travaux. Comment n'auraient-ils pas été frappés, dès l'abord, et tout au long de leur mission par deux faits d'importance capitale : la solitude, l'isolement où déclare se trouver la majorité des enseignants et l'ennui (comme on dit : le "désintérêt") qui tend à gagner l'élève. Solitude du maître dans ses rapports avec ses collègues, dans sa vie professionnelle, dans ses relations avec une administration lointaine (même quand elle est proche) et abstraite (même quand elle règle des questions concrètes), dans ses contacts avec une société qu'il connaît mal. Ce dernier trait est plein de sens : autrefois la méconnaissance du monde extérieur inquiétait peu les professeurs dans leur mission éducative. Elle les trouble aujourd'hui. C'est là un signe et sans doute un bon signe.

Ennui chez l'élève comportant même une tendance à "l'absentéisme", un refus qui peut rester purement passif, mais qui peut aussi se transformer en acte de contestation ou de violence, une inquiétude, en tout cas, à laquelle s'ajoute celle que provoque le très grand nombre de cerveaux enflammés qu'il faut

traverser pour passer d'une année scolaire à une autre, à laquelle se joint encore celle des perspectives professionnelles qu'il connaît mal et de son avenir qu'il ne perçoit pas clairement.

L'élève, pourtant, découvre dans la vie quotidienne, dans la lecture des journaux, dans l'écoute de la télévision et de la radio, dans les racontars qu'il ramasse partout, de vrais sujets d'intérêt. Le maître, de son côté, en souffre. Là où autrefois il trouvait des compensations précieuses à la relative modestie de son état, il considère que son personnage se dégrade. Au cours de toutes nos rencontres nous avons entendu cette confidence. Elle mériterait d'être retenue, qu'elle fût fondée ou non; or, moralement, elle est fondée.

Les causes historiques de cette crise de la "relation pédagogique" ont été étudiées, les conversations, les enquêtes que nous avons nous-mêmes menées les confirment. Elles tiennent grandement à l'effet de masse[a] qui s'est installé dans l'enseignement depuis plusieurs années et qui s'exerce sur tous les points à la fois.

Devant cette situation l'organisation scolaire met du temps à s'adapter. La réforme de structures tendant à substituer aux ségrégations antérieures l'Ecole commune des collèges d'enseignement secondaire, lancée en 1959, n'est pas devenue encore une réalité. On nous l'a fait remarquer: peu de choses ont été changées à la diversité des statuts (municipal ou national) des établissements, à celui des maîtres; peu de choses ont été modifiées dans les rites de l'enseignement; les écoles ne se sont guère ouvertes aux méthodes autres que magistrales, à la connaissance réelle du milieu contemporain.

Il est trop clair qu'un enseignement de masse s'adressant à tous les enfants a été plaqué sur une organisation prévue pour une sélection. Peut-être était-il impossible d'agir autrement, mais aujourd'hui il faut tirer les conséquences de la situation.

II.

Le "malaise" actuel n'est pas un trouble éphémère ou passager qui aurait chance de se dissiper de lui-même, ou qui relèverait de remèdes mineurs.

C'est le début d'une mutation profonde, qui mettra en question, personnellement, aussi bien les enseignants que les administrateurs, dans la conception qu'ils se font de leur rôle, et qui aboutira indissociablement à la mise en place d'un style pédagogique nouveau, aussi bien que de nouveaux comportements administratifs. La Commission tient à le souligner avec force : il s'agit d'un phénomène de civilisation, inéluctable, et qui s'étendra sur des lustres, voire des décennies.

A cette première conclusion, qui affirme l'ampleur et le caractère global des difficultés présentes, se joint un diagnostic plus précis. Ebranlée par de multiples facteurs, c'est la relation pédagogique la plus intime, le rapport du maître aux élèves, qui a subi le changement le plus décisif, et qui est en passe de connaître la mutation la plus délicate.

L'institution, mise elle aussi en demeure d'évoluer, sans s'être donnée des structures évolutives, répond au même moment aux sollicitations de la société par des mesures partielles, qui ne cessent d'affaiblir la cohérence interne du système éducatif et accroissent les difficultés des enseignants. N'ayant pas reconnu la nécessité d'une transformation du style pédagogique, l'institution ne fait rien pour l'accompagner : par là, elle entretient la confusion et provoque sans le vouloir des comportements maladroits ou excessifs, dans la recherche même d'une nouvelle façon de se comporter avec les élèves d'aujourd'hui. Ces erreurs renforcent l'administration dans sa prudence, et l'incitent à se méfier des nouveautés pédagogiques; il y a là un cercle inexorable, qui enferme les enseignants dans une situation sans issue.

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[a] En 1897, il y avait en France 131.000 élèves dans l'enseignement public, point de repère essentiel : ce chiffre a doublé vingt-huit ans plus tard mais il quadruple dans les trente-trois années suivantes et triple presque encore en quatorze ans, de 1958 à 1972, atteignant 3.700.000 élèves. L'enseignement réservé longtemps à 3 ou 5 % de privilégiés est en train de devenir l'école de tous jusqu'à seize ans.

Ainsi se fonde l'originalité du diagnostic de la Commission, qui est de lier étroitement le malaise des enseignants - dont le désintérêt des élèves est l'autre face - et l'inadaptation de l'institution. La Commission pense qu'il faut changer le rapport éducatif, mais qu'on n'y parviendra pas sans changer l'institution scolaire. L'Education nationale entre, à coup sûr, dans des années difficiles, où les anciens modèles seront contestés sans être totalement abandonnés, et où les nouveaux ne se laisseront pas définir sans débats, et peut-être même sans crises plus violentes.

III.

Des études nouvelles, cela signifie un travail de groupe pour les élèves, plus de place à leur initiative, et donc, inévitablement, l'éclatement de la classe comme groupement fixe, stable et uniforme des élèves. Les classes ne peuvent pas rester les unités élémentaires entre lesquelles la clientèle de l'établissement est répartie. On doit envisager des groupes plus larges pour certains exercices, des groupes plus restreints pour d'autres, voire des cellules très petites, ou des moments de travail entièrement individualisés. Qu'on adopte ici la structure dite des "groupes à pédagogie différenciée", ailleurs une structure spécifique en fonction du tiers-temps pédagogique, là enfin une structure d'options librement choisies par les élèves, à la limite, peu importe : une pédagogie souple ne peut se couler dans le moule rigide de classes uniformes.

Le cours cesse d'être l'exercice principal, sinon unique, et en tout cas central de la vie de l'école. Il ne disparaîtra pas (pourquoi nier qu'il présente en certains cas des avantages irremplaçables) : il ne sera plus qu'un exercice parmi d'autres, et on le choisira, on l'intégrera dans l'ensemble d'une progression précisément en fonction de ses avantages spécifiques. Mais il faut une gamme d'exercices infiniment plus variée, plus riche, pour répondre aux attentes des élèves et éviter d'engendrer la monotonie. Il ne s'agit pas d'apprendre à des gens qui ne savent pas, mais d'accueillir des gens qui savent partiellement, et de leur apprendre à mettre les perspectives. Pour cela, tous les exercices sont bons.

L'horaire, c'est-à-dire le tableau préétabli des cours faits à chaque classe, change de signification. Dès lors qu'un nouveau style pédagogique fait éclater la classe et module le temps suivant des rythmes changeants, on ne peut plus faire l'horaire classique, heure par heure et classe par classe. La nécessité d'un planning n'en demeure pas moins évidente, d'une part pour assurer la cohérence des actions éducatives, d'autre part pour veiller au plein emploi des locaux, du personnel et des matériels. Il y a heureusement pour atteindre ces objectifs dans les divers établissements, et éviter de trop grandes différences entre ceux-ci, d'autres méthodes que la fixation hebdomadaire d'un nombre d'heures à chaque discipline. On pourrait par exemple envisager de fixer des volumes horaires annuels, laissant les établissements moduler à leur guise ces grandes masses.

L'unité de base, qui doit permettre d'administrer des établissements pratiquant une pédagogie de ce type, doit être un groupe d'élèves assez nombreux, confiés à la responsabilité d'un groupe de professeurs comprenant toutes les disciplines, et s'il le faut plusieurs professeurs d'une seule discipline si tant est que la notion de discipline conserve sa vigueur actuelle dans le nouveau système, ce que l'expérience nous apprendra. C'est en quelque sorte un regroupement de classes au sens actuel. On peut l'entendre de plusieurs façons (unité de niveau ou groupement vertical).

Des problèmes de programmes existent. Avec les programmes uniformes, et qui fixent en détail le contenu et la progression des cours, l'innovation est toujours quelque peu délinquante : elle se pratique contre le système. D'autre part, on ne peut supprimer totalement les programmes, car le passage d'un établissement à un autre serait très difficile. Il faut donc des programmes, mais des programmes réduits à l'essentiel, qui fixent seulement les objectifs à atteindre, non les progressions à suivre. Bref, distinguer l'essentiel qui doit être fixé, de l'accessoire, qui ne doit point l'être.

Il est nécessaire d'instituer un système d'options dans notre enseignement. Le caractère obligatoire de tous les enseignements à l'intérieur d'une section donnée est un facteur de désintérêt des élèves. Si l'on veut qu'ils soient, comme on dit, "motivés" pour ce qu'ils étudient, il ne faut pas le leur imposer dans les moindres détails, mais leur en laisser choisir une partie importante. C'est sans doute courir le risque qu'ils négligent certains enseignements - encore que, dans un autre contexte, les enseignants exerceraient une influence considérable par leurs conseils - mais c'est à ce prix qu'on aura des chances de voir un grand nombre d'élèves étudier avec l'entrain, l'énergie et la curiosité des meilleurs.

Il serait nécessaire enfin de "dé-dramatiser" la scolarité en éliminant dans toute la mesure du possible la sélection par l'échec. La tâche n'est pas simple, mais on devrait envisager de renoncer aux redoublements, quitte à prévoir des groupes de soutien spécifiques pour telle ou telle déficience.

Ces transformations nous conduisent à imaginer des écoles radicalement différentes de celles dont nous avons l'habitude, et où la vie scolaire serait plus "vivante" plus de variété, plus de mouvement, plus de liberté, plus d'initiative pour tout le monde.

371.15 (44) Rapport, p. 5-7, 48-49, 59-61

PART TWO/DEUXIEME PARTIE

AUSTRIA — BANK OF TEACHING OBJECTIVES FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A project which aims at listing the detailed objectives of all technical and vocational curricula and the level of the corresponding student activity has been launched. It is intended in this way to provide the 'modules' for further curriculum research and development in this field.

The highly specialised curricula in technical and vocational education make the establishment of a bank of teaching objectives necessary whereas the well-defined overall aims of these courses make it feasible. When complete, the bank will facilitate the teachers' task in preparing their lessons and make their instruction more objective-oriented. It will assure a maximum of subject interpenetration while avoiding duplication of content in different subjects; it may permit streamlining of syllabi. Students stand to gain from these achievements.

The project is directed by Mr. K. KOWEINDL of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Arts, with Mr. P. POSCH of the Vienna School of Economics in charge of the scientific side. The actual working teams are composed of teachers at the schools concerned, who get a 50 per cent reduction in their teaching load in order to participate in the project. There are two to six teachers per team.

The project started with the work of three teams in mathematics (for technical, commercial, and catering trade schools respectively) in summer, 1971. The first results containing the experimental versions of lists of detailed teaching objectives for the first year of mathematics instruction in these schools were published in August, 1972. The versions for these three types of school include 351, 183 and 155 objectives respectively, each with an indication of the level of student activity involved and with illustrative problems and their solutions. A copy was sent to every mathematics teacher in technical and vocational education. Use of the material and participation in its evaluation, which will be undertaken in 1972/1973, is optional. Copies have also been sent for evaluation to teachers of engineering subjects, to university professors of mathematics, and to employers' and graduates' organisations. Evaluation is expected to lead to the preparation of an improved version. Meanwhile the three project teams are continuing work on the remaining part of the total mathematics syllabus.

In September, 1972, seven more project teams started to elaborate banks of teaching objectives for the following subjects English (at technical, commercial and domestic science schools), electronic data processing (technical schools), mechanics (technical schools), business arithmetic (commercial schools), and bookkeeping and taxation (commercial schools). At present limitations of staff, facilities, and funds do not permit more than ten teams to work simultaneously.

377 371.214.1 (436) Report; K.K.

BELGIQUE : REVISION DE LA POLITIQUE UNIVERSITAIRE

L'augmentation continue des dépenses universitaires et l'afflux toujours croissant des étudiants belges et étrangers ont amené le gouvernement à réexaminer sa politique universitaire. Deux arrêtés d'exécution de la loi du 27 juillet 1971 sur le financement et le contrôle des institutions universitaires ont été publiés au mois d'août et sont entrés en vigueur le 1er septembre 1972.

Augmentation des droits d'inscription

Le premier arrêté triple le montant des droits d'inscription requis précédemment pour les institutions de l'Etat. Toutefois, l'ancien taux d'inscription sera maintenu pour les étudiants boursiers. Désormais, pour les autres étudiants, le montant des droits d'inscription aux cours, leçons et exercices d'application que ces cours comportent, est fixé à 5,000 francs belges et le montant du droit d'inscription aux examens à 1,000 francs belges. Ainsi, la Belgique s'est ralliée à l'augmentation des droits d'inscription récemment effectuée aux Pays-Bas (cf. Newsletter 3/72).

Les études reconnues

Le deuxième arrêté fixe le nombre d'étudiants de chaque institution universitaire, celui-ci étant calculé par année d'étude dans chacune des orientations d'étude et de leurs subdivisions. Pour le calcul des allocations annuelles accordées par l'Etat au financement des dépenses ordinaires des institutions universitaires, ce nombre d'étudiants sera pris en considération.

Les dispositions très détaillées visent à éviter certains abus et réglementent plus strictement les conditions de subventions en se fondant sur le nombre réel d'étudiants dans les universités. C'est ainsi qu'un même étudiant ne peut être pris en compte qu'une fois, qu'il doit suivre un minimum de dix heures de cours par semaine; seuls les étudiants réguliers sont pris en considération - les auditeurs libres ne sont plus comptés -. Un étudiant ne peut plus se présenter à une même année d'étude plus de deux années consécutives, à l'exception de l'étudiant de première candidature qui change d'orientation et peut, en ce cas, essayer une année supplémentaire.

Seuls seront pris en considération les étudiants suivant les programmes d'études universitaires qui conduisent à l'octroi des grades reconnus. La liste de ces grades sera établie par les institutions universitaires et soumise au Ministre qui la publiera au "Moniteur".

Limitation du nombre d'étudiants étrangers

L'article 8 de cet arrêté énumère ensuite les conditions requises pour qu'un étudiant soit inscrit; seront prises en considération les inscriptions des étudiants

1. ressortissants belges ou luxembourgeois;
2. étrangers qui, pour des raisons philosophiques ou politiques, ne peuvent faire leurs études dans leur pays d'origine, ainsi que les apatrides;
3. originaires d'un pays ayant conclu un accord culturel avec la Belgique et exclusivement dans le cadre et les limites de cet accord;
4. originaires d'un pays en voie de développement reconnu comme tel par la Belgique ;
5. étrangers dont les parents sont domiciliés en Belgique et y exercent leur activité professionnelle;
6. étrangers ayant déjà réussi au moins une épreuve de l'examen pour l'un des grades reconnus;
7. étrangers qui n'appartiennent pas aux catégories précitées, mais ont été spécialement sélectionnés par une institution universitaire en vue de son rayonnement international, sans que ce nombre d'étudiants puisse dépasser 5 % du nombre total d'étudiants belges inscrits régulièrement dans cette institution l'année académique précédente.

Dans la tranche de 5 %, il appartiendra aux universités de décider de l'admission des étudiants étrangers dont la présence sera subventionnée par l'Etat. Selon les premiers calculs, sur les 9,000 étudiants étrangers dénombrés lors de l'année écoulée, on en garderait environ 6,000. La diminution du nombre des étudiants étrangers sera plus sensible dans les facultés de médecine, de pharmacie et des sciences sociales et politiques. C'est précisément dans ces secteurs qu'en Belgique les étudiants étrangers sont actuellement les plus nombreux, étant donné qu'il existe dans leurs pays d'origine un numerus clausus assez strict qui limite l'accès à ces études.

Modification de l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur

Il a également été décidé de modifier la loi du 8 juin 1964 sur les conditions d'accès à l'enseignement supérieur, de type long et universitaire.

Lors d'une conférence de presse, au début du mois d'août, les Ministres de l'éducation, MM. L. HUREZ et W. CLAES, ont constaté l'échec du système actuel de l'examen de maturité, et fait part de leur intention d'examiner les possibilités de remplacer ce système par un examen d'état. Celui-ci reprendrait les principes de l'examen de maturité actuel, mais serait organisé en dehors de l'école secondaire et de l'université, par un jury paritaire composé de professeurs du secondaire et de l'enseignement supérieur et universitaire. Les Ministres espèrent que la création de ce jury d'Etat, prévue pour septembre 1973 et dont les modalités doivent encore être étudiées, permettra de diminuer le nombre d'échecs en première candidature à l'université.

Les commentaires de presse ont, en général, accueilli favorablement les décisions du gouvernement. Il a été souligné que la Belgique qui, voici vingt ans manquait d'universitaires, doit aujourd'hui faire face à leur relatif surnombre. Une stabilisation de la population estudiantine et des dépenses universitaires pourrait donc être nécessaire. En outre, l'intention de réformer l'examen de maturité a été critiquée dans certains milieux, comme risquant de soulever de graves problèmes sociaux. Devant une instance neutre, les enfants issus de milieux modestes n'auront pas la même aisance verbale et la même capacité de synthèse que les autres. De plus, en donnant au jury d'Etat la consigne d'être plus ou moins strict, les autorités pourront introduire un numerus clausus pouvant varier d'année en année, en déterminant d'avance le nombre d'étudiants susceptibles d'être admis à l'université.

378.141.224 (493) Moniteur, 4/26-VIII-1972; M.B.

DENMARK : THE END OF EXAMINATIONS

The abolition of all forms of examinations in the nine-year basic school ("folkeskole") is one of the main points of the new Nine-year Compulsory School Bill submitted to Parliament at the end of July 1972. In their place both parents and pupils will receive regular information from teachers on school work, but no longer in the form of standard phrases or figures. "It may be given orally or in writing and its manner and frequency would be decided locally. There would be ne detailed accounts in written form of pupils' performances." Schools will continue to issue leaving certificates, if requested, listing the options taken by the pupils and containing a report on every subject they studied from the 7th school year onwards. Subject teachers, in writing these reports, are to describe the extent to which a pupil "has acquired the knowledge and skills, working methods and forms of expression as laid down in the aims of the school."

The Education Minister, Mr. Knud HEINESEN, believes that the reports envisaged, extending over every subject and over the last three or four years of a pupil's work, will give a fairer and more complete picture of his abilities and achievements than the traditional memory test-type exams.

A corollary of this reform is that no pupil will have to "stay down" in a class and repeat a whole year. The abolition of the examination at the end of basic school also means that the responsibility for deciding whether a pupil may go on to upper secondary school ("gymnasieskola") is no longer the school's : the pupil himself and his parents must decide this question, and the school will only advise them as to the pupil's talents and

likelihood of success. The sorting and-eliminating function of the examination is thus abolished, and its information and guidance function enhanced. By this reform the upper secondary school comes into line with the universities, entry to which is no longer dependant on success in the "studentereksamen", the final leaving examination of the "gymnasieskola".

It is at the discretion of the pupil whether or not his school reports should remain confidential to himself. In this way it is hoped that the situation can be prevented, where a pupil's chances of success at various later stages can be compromised by a bad reputation arising from the assessment he received from his "folkeskole" teachers.

A proposal that the results of the "folkeskole" assessments, if they could not be used to exclude any pupil from the "gymnasieskola", should still be employed to stream and to limit their access to certain levels of the upper secondary school according to their apparent ability, has been abandoned. By this scheme only the "better" pupils would have been admitted to the whole span of upper secondary education leading to post-secondary education, the others being limited to a shorter secondary course. However, the provision of two levels of instruction in mathematics, English, German and physics-chemistry in upper secondary will be continued, the pupil himself choosing which level to study.

371.26 : 37.014.1 (489) Politiken, 14/28-VII-1972; Den Danske Realskole, No. 14/1972; J.L., P.L.

ESPAGNE : CREATION D'UN ENSEIGNEMENT UNIVERSITAIRE A DISTANCE ET DE NOUVELLES UNIVERSITES

Le gouvernement vient d'annoncer la création de quatre nouvelles universités dont l'une sera une université "sur les ondes". Portant le nom d' "Université Nationale pour l'enseignement à distance", elle aura son siège central à Madrid avec des bureaux dans plusieurs provinces et commencera à fonctionner à partir de janvier 1973. Elle dispensera ses enseignements au moyen de la radio, de la télévision et des cours par correspondance; elle organisera également pour ses étudiants des cours d'été itinérants dans plusieurs villes. L'université nationale pour l'enseignement à distance conférera des degrés académiques en sciences économiques, gestion des entreprises, jurisprudence, lettres et philosophie. Une extension ultérieure à d'autres domaines est prévue. Tous les étudiants de cette université devront posséder les qualifications requises pour l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur, mais des exceptions pourront être faites pour les personnes âgées de plus de 25 ans.

Le but de cet enseignement universitaire à distance est d'offrir des cours à ceux qui ne disposent pas d'une université proche de leur domicile ou qui sont déjà intégrés à la vie active. Ces mêmes cours profiteront également aux Espagnols vivant à l'étranger, ce qui constitue une innovation importante pour les travailleurs émigrés, en particulier pour leurs enfants. La mise en marche de cette nouvelle institution a été organisée par une Commission créée par décret en 1971. Elle a étudié en particulier ce qui a été fait dans ce domaine dans d'autres pays où de telles universités "sur les ondes" ont déjà fait leurs preuves - comme, par exemple, en Amérique du Nord, au Royaume-Uni (Open University), en Israël et au Japon.

Les trois autres nouvelles institutions seront des universités traditionnelles installées à Cordoue, Malage et Santander. Eventuellement, deux nouvelles universités pourraient être créées en 1975 conformément aux prévisions du troisième plan national de développement économique entré en vigueur au début de 1972.

Cette politique d'expansion qui tend à satisfaire la demande toujours croissante d'études universitaires et à fournir les cadres nécessaires au développement du pays, se heurte cependant à de nombreux obstacles parmi lesquels figurent en premier lieu le problème financier et le manque d'enseignants universitaires qualifiés.

37.018.43 : 378 (460) Communiqué; The Times Higher Education Supplement 1-IX-1972; J.J.

FINLAND : OBJECTIVES FOR UPPER SECONDARY REFORM

Reform of the education of the 16 - 19 age group has become necessary in the eyes of the Government, partly because of the introduction of a comprehensive school system up to the age of 16 and partly because of the quantitative development of secondary education, which is characterised by surprisingly rapid expansion in the general education sector in relation to that in vocational education.

During the 1960s the Cabinet appointed many committees to prepare a reform of some particular section of education for the 16 - 19 age group, for example the respective Committees for technical, commercial and general education. When measures were taken to implement the proposals of these committees, it was found that they had all followed different educational objectives, which led to an inconsistent educational policy. In March 1971 the Cabinet therefore appointed a committee to define the general educational policy objectives following from the general consensus on social policy objectives and to derive from these the structure, methods and content of the education of the 16 - 19 age group.

The committee is composed of 16 ordinary members (including the Chairman), who represent the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the National Board of Education and the National Board of Vocational Education. In addition to these, there are 23 specialists in educational and social research, and labour market and economic affairs, as well as representatives of local authorities and teachers' and pupils' organisations. The Chairman of the Committee is Mr. Jaakko ITÄLA, the former Minister of Education.

In its work, the Committee found itself confronted with a dilemma : it was not competent to define precisely the general objectives of social policy, because this was the task of Parliament, the duty of the Committee, however, was to indicate clearly what kind of general social objectives might be implemented by the reforms it will propose.

The practical work of the Committee has proceeded as follows : the Committee has defined for the education of the 16 - 19 year olds the general social policy objectives to be pursued and has thence derived appropriate general educational objectives. The external and internal structure of the existing school system for the 16 - 19 age group has then been tested against the educational objectives thus arrived at. For this purpose the Committee made three extensive investigations into the following topics :

- the social background of pupils in general and vocational education at upper secondary level;
- the proportion of employees who have completed vocational education;
- common features and differences in the curricula of the schools for the 16 - 19 age group.

The Committee then defined the main principles for the reform of the present educational structure. Much research work and experiment is still needed before implementing these principles. For this purpose, the Cabinet has recently appointed a Curriculum Committee to transform the general educational policy objectives into practical principles for the development of curricula. The Chairman of this committee is Mr. Ulf SUNDQVIST, the Minister of Education.

The main problems which the 1971 Educational Committee had to decide were the following :

- Should the level of occupation attained by an individual depend on the length of his general education, as is the case at present, or should all pupils be given the same general education, whatever their eventual occupation ?
- If general education were of the same length for everybody, should education leading to different occupations (trades and professions) begin at different levels, as it does now, or at the same level ? In other words should the choice of the level of occupation precede the choice of the field of occupation, as at present, or the reverse ?
- What are the pedagogical strategy and methods necessary for realising the objectives which the Committee will propose ?

The work of the 1971 Education Committee is due to be completed at the end of this year.

37.014.3 : 373.574 (489) Report: L. M.

FRANCE : LA RENTREE, LE BUDGET ET LES PRIORITES

M. Joseph FONTANET, Ministre de l'Education nationale, a présenté, au cours d'une conférence de presse, le projet de budget de l'Education nationale pour 1973.

Avec 36,07 milliards de francs (soit 17,97 % des dépenses définitives de l'Etat), l'Education nationale sera en 1973 le ministère le plus dépensier, avant celui de la défense nationale. Son importance est justifiée, estime M. FONTANET, par sa mission qui se situe à un double niveau : l'accueil des enfants dans des locaux adaptés et des classes qui ne soient pas surchargées; l'amélioration de l'enseignement, afin qu'il tienne compte davantage des débouchés professionnels et de la diversité de la situation des enfants.

L'effort en matière d'accueil concerne à la fois les maîtres et les locaux : création d'emplois, mesures de revalorisation de la situation de certaines catégories très importantes d'enseignants, poursuite des actions engagées en matières de constructions nouvelles.

L'action en faveur de l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement, d'une plus grande égalité des chances et d'un enseignement préparant mieux les jeunes à affronter leur avenir est cependant la partie la plus significative du budget. "Une meilleure formation des maîtres est la première condition de toute rénovation pédagogique", affirme M. FONTANET. En ce qui concerne les instituteurs, une mesure importante a déjà été prise : chaque instituteur titulaire en position d'activité a droit désormais à un crédit de formation de trente-six semaines à répartir sur toute sa carrière. Quant à la formation des maîtres du second degré, une commission présidée par le recteur PAULIAN a établi un rapport dont les conclusions sont actuellement à l'étude en vue des mesures à prendre. Parallèlement, un effort se développe en ce qui concerne la formation continue de ces enseignants. D'ores et déjà, le recyclage des professeurs de mathématiques a pu être organisé. Il s'agit maintenant d'en étendre le bénéfice à l'ensemble des professeurs du second degré.

L'optimisation de l'enseignement passe également par une meilleure orientation scolaire et professionnelle. Selon M. FONTANET ce point doit être prioritaire. "Il y a, a-t-il déclaré, un taux d'échec trop élevé ... ces abandons sont préjudiciables pour les étudiants eux-mêmes qui, mal préparés à la vie active, y entrent dans les plus mauvaises conditions ... Il y a à la fois un gâchis humain et un gaspillage de crédits ... il est incontestable qu'une pédagogie rénovée, faisant place à des actions de soutien permettrait de venir en aide aux élèves en difficulté qui très souvent sont handicapés par leur environnement socio-culturel et leurs conditions matérielles de vie."

En ce qui concerne l'orientation scolaire, des progrès ont été réalisés grâce à la création de l'ONISEP (Office National d'Information sur les enseignements et les professions) qui diffuse de nombreuses informations sur les filières de formation conduisant aux divers métiers. En outre, des mesures intéressantes ont été prises pour cette année, notamment la décision de faire du premier trimestre de sixième (première année du secondaire) un trimestre d'observation. Mais il reste encore beaucoup à faire pour bien connaître les débouchés, informer convenablement les familles et conseiller les jeunes en fonction à la fois de leurs capacités, de leurs goûts et des possibilités réelles de l'économie. Cela suppose des liaisons entre l'école et le monde extérieur, tout un mécanisme d'observation et d'orientation qui permette de suivre les jeunes durant leurs études et le renforcement du corps des conseillers d'orientation.

Mais une meilleure orientation suppose également l'existence de filières d'enseignement adaptées et notamment un développement de l'enseignement technique. C'est dans ce but qu'a été mise en place dès la rentrée 1972 la réforme des classes pratiques qui doit permettre à tous les enfants de sortir de l'enseignement avec une solide formation professionnelle. C'est dans ce but également que sont prises les mesures de promotion de l'enseignement technologique : meilleure formation des maîtres et revalorisation des traitements des enseignants.

Un dossier très important également concerne la formation continue. Les périodes de formation devraient à l'avenir alterner avec les périodes de vie active. Dans cette optique, la formation scolaire devient la première phase d'une formation permanente dont elle doit donner à chacun le goût et les possibilités. A ce sujet, M. FONTANET vient de signer des "contrats d'assistance initiale" avec les présidents de quarante universités. Ces contrats accordent pour un an à chaque établissement un crédit de 150 à 250.000 francs pour les études né-

FRANCE : EDUCATION DU GROUPE D'AGE 16 - 19 ANS - RECHERCHES ET REFLEXIONS

Actuellement la recherche pédagogique se préoccupe tout particulièrement du groupe d'âge 16-19 ans. Parmi les thèmes majeurs de recherche se rapportant à ce groupe d'âge, il convient de signaler ceux qui ont été retenus pour la période 1972-1975 conformément aux orientations du VIe Plan :

- expérimentation du projet "unités capitalisables" en vue d'une réforme des diplômes de l'enseignement technique;
- utilisation des méthodes de simulation dans la formation professionnelle;
- réorganisation des études du second cycle et mise en place d'un lycée expérimental pour de nouvelles structures et programmes du second cycle;
- recherche sur l'organisation d'un travail indépendant de l'élève dans le cadre des structures et programmes actuels;
- recherche sur l'intérêt d'un enseignement par groupes de niveaux dans le second cycle;
- enquête sur le profil moyen de l'élève à la sortie du second cycle;
- recherche sur un contenu d'éducation susceptible d'assurer la disponibilité de l'élève à la fin de ses études secondaires;
- recherche sur la motivation de l'élève;
- recherche sur l'évaluation du bilan scolaire de l'élève associant le contrôle continu et des formes simplifiées d'examen;
- recherche sur l'enseignement des diverses disciplines;
- recherche sur l'enseignement de l'informatique et par l'informatique.

Ces recherches sont menées sous le contrôle de la direction déléguée aux enseignements élémentaire et secondaire qui prépare la mise en place du nouveau second cycle.

La préparation de la réforme de ce nouveau second cycle est un travail de longue haleine. Elle est engagée sur trois fronts :

Les objectifs de la réforme et les solutions proposées

La notion de culture reste le fondement de la réforme et implique que soient offerts à tous les élèves du second cycle long, d'une part une formation scientifique substantielle, d'autre part un développement méthodique des moyens d'expression et des capacités d'appréhension intellectuelle et artistique, et enfin une initiation à l'intelligence des réalités du monde contemporain. En face des manifestations de refus et d'échec qui se multiplient dans la vie scolaire, il convient d'assurer une motivation plus forte de l'adolescent en augmentant la part du libre choix, la place de l'optionnel dans les enseignements dispensés. L'idée retenue est d'associer enseignements communs et options : on maintient une formation générale solide grâce à des enseignements obligatoires relativement importants, mais on favorise le choix de l'élève par un large éventail d'options.

Il apparaît également nécessaire de préparer l'élève à l'exercice du travail personnel sous la forme d'une participation plus active à l'acte d'éducation (travaux individuels, groupes plus réduits) et de considérer plus sérieusement l'examen comme un moyen d'évaluation de la progression effectuée et non pas comme un but de l'éducation.

Les expériences et les contrôles

Dès la rentrée scolaire 1972, quatre établissements seront engagés dans une expérimentation préalable de la nouvelle classe de seconde (structures, horaires, programmes et méthodes nouvelles) et cette expérience sera étendue avant d'aboutir à une généralisation. En même temps, on se préoccupera de l'évaluation des résultats obtenus à partir de critères objectifs, comme des tests ou des contrôles normalisés (connaissances, savoir-faire, aptitudes, attitudes). Cette réforme sera suivie de très près par tout un système chargé de vérifier la réalisation des objectifs et de procéder le cas échéant à des infléchissements.

Les consultations des corps d'inspection et des associations professionnelles

A la suite de ces consultations, des problèmes ont déjà été particulièrement évoqués qui devront faire l'objet d'une réflexion complémentaire : importance accordée à certaines disciplines par rapport à d'autres, place de l'interdisciplinaire, de l'éducation physique et des enseignements artistiques et surtout place des enseignement technologiques dans le cadre du second cycle rénové.

La place du second cycle court par rapport au cycle long mérite également une attention particulière, et il s'agirait d'aménager au mieux les procédures d'accueil d'un cycle à l'autre avec mise en place de techniques efficaces de rattrapage.

Enfin, l'entrée dans les enseignements supérieurs pose un ultime et essentiel problème. Un second cycle rénové devra trouver sa correspondance dans un enseignement supérieur adapté, sinon des distorsions dangereuses pourront apparaître. D'autre part le problème de l'accès aux enseignements supérieurs est également brûlant : faut-il y admettre tous les détenteurs du baccalauréat qui le désirent ou pratiquer un recrutement plus sélectif ? Dans un premier temps, il semble que ce soit surtout un problème d'orientation et d'adaptation dans les principales filières des enseignements supérieurs qui impose un effort de réflexion.

37.04 - 050 "45, 16/19" (44) Rapport: C.P. - I.J.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : CONVENTION ON ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In late October the Prime Ministers of the Länder signed a convention on admission to higher education. The Standing Conference of Education Ministers of the Länder had agreed on the draft convention, elaborated by its Higher Education Committee, in early October. The Convention has still to be ratified by the Parliaments of the eleven Länder and its stipulations are expected to enter into force as from the summer semester 1973.

In July the Constitutional Court of the Federal Republic gave its verdict on the numerus clausus problem and ruled that everybody who possessed the necessary qualification (the Abitur or its equivalent) had the right to be admitted to higher education. However, where demand exceeded available places, restriction of admission would be constitutionally acceptable under the following conditions :

- the teaching facilities of the institutions concerned must be fully stretched,
- the selection of applicants must be based on relevant and uniform critera and the applicants' preference for a specific university must be taken into consideration as far as possible,
- the procedure must be based on federal legislation or on a convention between the Länder, if federal legislation cannot be speedily enacted.

The Convention creates a Central Agency, to be situated at Münster, for the admission of applicants to study courses where a limit to student numbers has been decreed by the Land in which the university or college concerned is situated and where demand exceeds this limit. Uniform criteria for assessing intake capacity will be elaborated by the Central Agency's Governing Board which is composed of representatives of the Länder Education Ministries. The Central Agency's Advisory Academic Council, which consists of one university representative per Land, can make recommendations on this matter and has to be consulted before a decision is taken. On the basis of these criteria each university or college concerned will propose the limits to be set to student numbers in the respective study course (s), and the Education Ministry will promulgate a decree establishing the limits for a definite period, generally one year.

The Convention contains detailed regulations for the distribution and selection of applicants. If the number of applicants for a course at a particular university or college exceeds the intake capacity, but if there are still places available at another university or college, the Central Agency shall admit the applicant to such an institution, consideration being given to his list of preferences. If, however, the number of applicants exceeds the national total of places for the course concerned, the Central Agency shall select the applicants for admission. For these purposes the Central Agency is equipped with a computer.

The selection criteria, which will be promulgated by uniform Länder decrees, are the following :

- up to 15 % available study places have to be reserved for German applicants who, if not admitted, would for social or family reasons suffer grave hardship, and up to 8 % for foreign or stateless applicants;
- of the remaining places, 60 % will be distributed according to 'aptitude and achievement', and 40 % according to the applicant's place on the 'waiting list' i.e. the number of yers he or she has been waiting for admittance.

The selection of applicants according to aptitude and achievement will be based on the average of the marks obtained in the leaving certificate of the grammar school or of the college from which admission to a university is sought. The average will be calculated to one decimal place. Applicants who have passed their Abitur at a 'second path' establishment may get a bonus of up to 0.2.

As the Abitur is not a national examination, measures had to be taken to ensure equivalence of marks. Each Land has to calculate annually the average mark of each of its Abitur certificates, as a basis for determining the national average. If the Land average is lower than the national average i.e. if its Abitur is more 'difficult' than that of other Länder, applicants from the Land concerned get a corresponding bonus, and vice versa.

The Convention has been concluded for five years. Provision has been made for the admission criteria to be re-examined after three years.

In the press fear has been expressed that this admission policy will reinforce selection and competition, drill and rote, and thereby jeopardize educational reform. The Länder spokesmen, on the other hand, have stressed that the already overburdened universities cannot undertake to establish a national higher education entrance examination and that experience in Germany and abroad has proved that school leaving certificates have a higher prognostic validity as to later academic success than any tests so far devised. It was also pointed out that the two solutions proposed by supporters of the recurrent education concept are unrealistic. These solutions would have been to admit all secondary leavers to a basic course at comprehensive universities and

thereafter to select students for main courses spread over a longer time span, or to confer during upper secondary education an academic together with a basic professional qualification and to admit students only after they have been engaged in gainful employment.

It was underlined that there was no alternative to this admission policy. Although during the period 1970-1972 the national intake capacity of higher education increased by 80,000 places and will be further increased by 240,000 places by 1976 (at a cost of 18 billion DM), there will still be a surplus of demand in 1976 : at least 745,000 applicants as compared to 686,000 places available. At present, the situation is worst in medicine (3,360 places for 22,350 applicants), in dentistry (560 places for 7,240 applicants) and in pharmacy (716 places for 10,340 applicants). Other departments, like psychology, architecture, chemistry, biology, physics and mathematics have also had to introduce a numerus clausus and already some universities e.g. Hamburg, have had to limit access to all courses.

378.141.224(430.1) Convention; Education and Science No 9/1972; v.M.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL CENTRES PROPOSED

The Donors' Association, one of the German foundations promoting education and science, at a meeting near Essen in early October presented a project proposing the creation of some 60 Regional Education Centres and decided to finance at least two such centres, jointly with other foundations, to test the project.

The project was elaborated by a working party following the 1970 meeting of the Association and was introduced at Essen by Professor BAUERSFELD, who holds the chair in mathematics at Frankfurt University. The following considerations have guided the project :

- The organisational reforms which have so far been preoccupying educational policy, have had a minor impact on the class-room. Educational reform can be achieved only through curriculum reform.
- The attempt to develop comprehensive curricula by prominent academics and to hand them down to the teachers for application in the class-room has failed, as experience in the USA has shown.
- Curriculum reform can only be successful if the teachers concerned are actively involved, if academic know-how is contributed by researchers and if such co-operation is carried out in a pragmatic way and on a local basis.

The project team, which acknowledges having been greatly influenced by the positive experience of the Schools Council for England and Wales and by Swedish curriculum reform, proposes the creation of Regional Education Centres each catering for a region having a population of one million (i.e. some 5,000 teachers and 150,000 pupils). A centre should have some 15 full-time posts for academics, some 10 posts for seconded teachers working either full-time or on a part-time equivalent basis and some 35 posts for technical and clerical staff. The annual budget of a centre is assessed at 2.25 million DM of which 1.5 DM is for staff expenditure.

The centres' task should be to organise curriculum development projects, to offer in-service training for teachers on curriculum problems and to provide an information and advice service for the schools in their respective regions. The centres should co-operate at Land and at national levels; at the latter an independent Curriculum Institute should be set up to co-ordinate the activities of the regional centres.

The centres should be incorporated as autonomous institutions, into the school administration of the appropriate Land and be publicly financed. The governing board and the curriculum council of each centre should be composed of school administrators, teachers and academics and each centre should organise at regular intervals public discussions of its curriculum projects.

The spokesman of the education ministries of the Länder agreed at the meeting that educational decision making must be further decentralised and that the teachers must participate in curriculum development. But he also raised the central issue which will determine how far this project can succeed, namely the problem of what degree of autonomy can be granted to the individual school in a system in which all schools are state

institutions and are under the control of the Parliament of the Land.

107 : 37 (430. 1) Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft, No 4/1972; v.M.

IRELAND : YOUNG SCHOOL LEAVERS

Major changes in the administration of primary education have been recommended in a report carried out for the Development Branch of the Department of Education and financed by its research committee. The report which has recently been published, is based on extensive research conducted in 1969 and 1970, the sample consisting of 1,063 children who ended their education at the primary (national school) level - about 18 % of the national total.

The report recommends that transfer from primary to post-primary schools be automatic, and that all primary (national) schools be formally linked to a post-primary school. All children, whether they are still attending school or not, should remain the responsibility of their school until they reach the age of 15 years. "The school should supervise leavers, keep records of them and encourage them to participate in extra-curricular activities. They should be eligible to use the school health, dental, welfare, psychological and psychiatric service. They might be termed 'out of school' pupils."

The report says that although theoretically every child should be able to get a place in a post-primary school, certain social factors make the process more or less easy, and may preclude some children altogether. Parents send their children when they can to the better schools. However the bad schools remain to cater for the children of less knowledgeable parents or of parents who are unable to exercise a choice of school.

Traditionally secondary and tertiary education have been seen as the preserve of the academically able in which only the ablest will cross all the hurdles. It is one thing, the report notes, to accept that all children should get some post-primary education; it is another to adapt the post-primary systems for them and to break down attitudes and structures which have been entrenched for years. School teachers, both primary and post-primary, and parents have been used to pushing the brightest child over examination hurdles and may find it difficult to envisage a comprehensive post-primary system of education, which is adapted to receive all children irrespective of their academic attainment and their apparent abilities. Rationally the more backward a child, the more time he should spend at school and the more help he should get. The idea that education is only for the academically able is as illogical as a health service designed only for the healthy.

According to the report many of the sample came from poorer families, particularly from those where the father's employment was insecure. Even so, in a large number of cases economic measures by themselves would have made no difference, nearly half the leavers coming from families that were "adequately" or "comfortably" off. The report points out that there seems to be a danger of the economic explanation being taken as the simple and overriding one and of more complicated factors being ignored.

In the section of the report which deals with the attitudes of young school leavers towards education, it is noted that only a few of the children were hostile to school. Most of them, however, had found difficulty in some aspect of the learning process. Their learning difficulties seemed to dominate everything else. Whether or not a subject was boring or relevant appeared less important to most of them than that they were able to do it.

Referring to the employment choices of the early leavers, the report says that those from city areas proceeded on a trial and error basis. They tried their hand at a number of jobs before they found one that suited them. In the early stages of their search for jobs they did not appear to be influenced by the amount of money offered. What was apparent was that there had been no guidance in the matter of job choice.

The report recommends that a points system be devised to assess the financial needs of individual schools. "Schools could be told at the beginning of the financial year how much money had been allocated to them for extras and, apart from an account at the end of the year stating how it was spent, no conditions need be attached. This system would replace grants for specific purposes, as many schools most in need are not in a

position to avail themselves of these grants, and hence do not apply for them."

371.212.8 (417) The Irish Times, 30-IX-1972; W.F.J.

ITALIE : LA REFORME AU DEBUT DE L'ANNEE SCOLAIRE 1972/1973

Les déclarations de M. SCALFARO, Ministre de l'Instruction publique, et celles de M. ANDREOTTI, Président du Conseil, devant le Parlement ont permis de constater l'importance actuelle de l'instruction publique aux yeux du gouvernement comme en témoignent d'ailleurs le grand nombre de projets, à l'étude ou adoptées dès à présent. Ces projets concernent essentiellement :

- l'école maternelle et primaire,
- l'école secondaire du premier degré,
- l'école secondaire du deuxième degré,
- l'enseignement supérieur.

De plus, une nouvelle réglementation des assemblées d'élèves ou d'étudiants a été mise en place et le rôle des "Corsi abilitanti speciali" (cours spéciaux permettant aux enseignants non-certifiés d'obtenir le certificat d'aptitude à l'enseignement secondaire) a été précisé quant à l'esprit et quant aux modalités de leur déroulement.

Ecole maternelle

Des écoles maternelles doivent être créées dans les centres qui en sont privés. A l'heure actuelle, à côté des écoles maternelles d'Etat, les ecoles maternelles privées non gratuites restent nombreuses. Pour les écoles maternelles d'Etat, les enfants bénéficient déjà, dans certaines régions, du transport gratuit qui doit être progressivement étendu au reste du pays.

Ecole primaire

Dans le primaire, l'expérience la plus intéressante est celle du "plein-temps" pour les élèves. Cette expérience débute cette année et concerne pour l'instant 2.000 maîtres et un nombre d'élèves correspondant. Elle consiste, dans la pratique, à prolonger dans l'après-midi l'activité pédagogique. Les élèves pourront manger à l'école ou rentrer chez eux et revenir ensuite. L'après-midi, réunis en groupes (qui ne coïncident pas forcément avec les classes) et sous le contrôle d'éducateurs spécialisés, ils participeront à des activités à caractère culturel et éducatif. Les groupes auront toute liberté d'initiative, à condition de ne pas tomber dans l'improvisation.

Un problème se pose cependant : celui de la formation et de la qualification de ces éducateurs. D'après leur statut (non encore entièrement voté par le Parlement), ils devront être titulaires d'un diplôme universitaire.

Ecole secondaire

Pour M. SCALFARO, Ministre de l'Instruction publique, la réforme du secondaire du deuxième degré ne saurait plus attendre car les avantages obtenus grâce à la réforme du secondaire du premier degré (introduction de l'école moyenne unifiée d'une durée de trois ans) risqueraient d'être anéantis par un manque de coordination. La réforme du secondaire supérieur, dont la base est constituée par les travaux de la Commission BIASINI, devrait être approuvée prochainement par le Parlement et entrer en vigueur en 1973/1974.

Les objectifs principaux de cette réforme du deuxième degré du secondaire sont les suivants :

- mettre en place un cycle unitaire de deux ans, c'est-à-dire un tronc commun d'étude pour les deux premières années, mais avec une possibilité de choix entre diverses options selon les aptitudes de chacun;
- obtenir une organisation scolaire moins fragmentée en réduisant les trop nombreuses séries de baccalauréats ("maturità") obtenus après cinq ans d'études secondaires du deuxième degré, à trois fondamentales : une série humaniste à dominante classique et linguistique, une série technique à dominante industrielle, agricole ou commerciale, une série à dominante scientifique;
- instaurer un rapport nouveau entre formation scolaire et formation professionnelle : les programmes scolaires

devront désormais tenir compte plus strictement des exigences qu'implique la préparation à la vie professionnelle. Actuellement, il existe, en Italie, quatre-vingt centres d'orientation professionnelle, la plupart au niveau des provinces. La formation professionnelle revêt une importance particulière pour le gouvernement, du fait de la participation des régions et parce qu'elle permet d'approfondir la formation technique des jeunes pendant le service militaire.

Enseignement supérieur

Le gouvernement présentera prochainement un projet de loi sur les points suivants :

- attribution de bourses d'étude et d'allocations à ceux qui en ont besoin;
- augmentation du nombre des professeurs titulaires pour faire face au nombre croissant des étudiants;
- développement de la construction universitaire;
- création d'un conseil national universitaire;
- mise en place de nouvelles formes de recrutement pour ceux qui se destinent à la recherche scientifique (doctorat de recherche).

Quant à la réforme organique de l'université, elle consiste, en substance, en une loi-cadre dont l'essentiel serait : le travail à plein temps des enseignants; l'incompatibilité de l'enseignement avec d'autres professions; la création d'organes d'auto-gestion des facultés.

La nouvelle réglementation des assemblées d'élèves et d'étudiants

La circulaire du Ministre de l'Instruction publique, M. SCALFARO, du début octobre, comporte quatorze pages qui expriment avant tout la notion essentielle : "L'école appartient à tous".

Il est question de la responsabilité des enseignants et de la participation des familles et des jeunes à la vie scolaire. Il s'agit, le plus souvent, de "considérations" et non d'une réglementation minutieuse qui, selon le Ministre, ne serait ni opportune ni valable étant donné la diversité des situations scolaires. Cependant, certains points ont été précisés de manière plus concrète :

La participation : les élèves doivent participer directement à l'organisation et à la gestion de certaines activités : bibliothèque, activités artistiques, sportives, sociales, etc. La collaboration des enseignants ne devra jamais être écartée. Ceux-ci, par leur présence discrète et tout en respectant la liberté des élèves, devront leur servir de guide.

Les assemblées : Elles doivent être à la fois un moment important d'éducation civique et une expression organisée de l'autonomie des jeunes. Il faut pour cela que les opinions et les propositions de tous les élèves s'expriment ou soient débattues dans le cadre de ces assemblées et que cette assemblée crée ses organes représentatifs investis de responsabilités particulières et spécifiques en fonction des diverses formes d'activités libres.

Le Ministre suggère, en outre, que chaque assemblée, dans la limite des trois heures mensuelles prévues, soit précédée de réunions partielles de classes ou de cours, étant entendu qu'un maximum de deux heures par mois leur serait consacré.

Le thème proposé à chaque assemblée devrait être, en temps voulu, porté à la connaissance de tous les élèves et approuvé par au moins un tiers des inscrits. Les séances de l'assemblée seraient suspendues dans tous les cas où elles dégénèreraient en violence et empêcheraient le fonctionnement régulier et normal de l'établissement.

Il est également prévu que des spécialistes participent aux assemblées. Il faudra que la proposition en soit faite sept jours avant la séance, et que la proposition soit soumise à l'approbation des organes collectifs de l'école, sur l'avis des organismes représentatifs des parents et des élèves. La présence de ces spécialistes devra être considérée en tant que témoignage de personnes particulièrement compétentes dans des branches déterminées du savoir ou d'activités qui se réfèrent directement à la formation culturelle des élèves.

Il faudra enfin encourager la présence de représentants des élèves dans des organismes tels que les conseils d'administration des caisses scolaires, groupes sportifs, réunions pour le choix du matériel pédagogique.

Toutes ces mesures prises à longue ou brève échéance, toutes ces réformes, extrêmement difficiles à réaliser et à appliquer, tendent à améliorer l'efficacité du système scolaire face aux exigences de la vie moderne et face aux impératifs d'une population scolaire en évolution constante et rapide. Les tableaux ci-dessous indiquent

à la fois l'évolution des dépenses pour l'école et l'augmentation des effectifs scolaires en 1972/1973 par rapport à 1970/1971 démontrant ainsi le développement dynamique du système scolaire.

Dépense de l'Etat pour l'école (en millions de lires)

1966 : 1.455.593,0	Prévisions :
1968 : 1.785.500,0	1973 : 2.871.300,0
1970 : 2.145.809,0	1976 : 3.478.900,0
1972 : 2.612.800,0	

Nombre d'élèves

	Année scolaire 1970/1971	Année scolaire 1972/1973
Ecole maternelle :	1.499.469	1.500.000
Ecole primaire :	4.891.454	4.900.000
Ecole moyenne :	2.167.675	2.400.000
Enseignement secondaire du 2e degré :	1.631.264	1.800.000
Total :	10.214.312	10.600.000

37.014.3 (45) Corriere della Serra, septembre/octobre 1972; D.P.

MALTA : AN ADVISORY EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION

The government has appointed a committee of prominent education experts from various European countries to study the system of education in Malta and to suggest reforms both to improve it and at the same time to bring it more into line with the education systems of Western Europe. The committee includes members from Belgium, France, Italy and the United Kingdom, and a German expert is likely to be added. They will be asked to study the Maltese system of education at primary and secondary level, the trade schools, technical institutes and the polytechnic college, as well as present provisions for teacher education.

The committee will be chaired by Professor Paul STRETTEN, economist, and warden of Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, who is also a member of the Royal University of Malta Commission. The committee will work in close co-ordination with the University Commission and the two bodies are jointly to draw up a seven-year plan for education combining harmonisation with Europe and attainment of the social and economic objectives of the country.

Other members of the committee include Professor H. REE of York University, specialist in teacher training, who is vice-chairman; Mr. P. VANLEENEN, of the Belgian Ministry of Education; Mlle F. CARPENTIER, Director of the primary school teacher training college, Paris; Professor L. VALLI and Dr. D. VINCIARELLI of the Italian Ministry of Education.

The Maltese government has also asked the advice of Professor R. DAHRENDORF on the question of the provision of university education in Malta. Professor DAHRENDORF, at present the EEC Commissioner responsible for the external relations of the Community, was formerly professor of sociology at the new university of Konstanz (Federal Republic of Germany) and one of its founding fathers.

37.014 (458.2) Times of Malta, 28-IX-1972; P.L.

NETHERLANDS : EDUCATIONAL POLICIES OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

Mr. G. van VEEN, Minister of Education and Sciences in the new government, has stated that one of the main objectives in the field of education will be to make the system less rigid by promoting greater co-ordination between the various educational stages. Among the measures envisaged are the following :

Pre-school education

Entry age is to be lowered to 3 years 9 months, and there is to be much closer co-operation between the nursery and primary schools.

Vocational lower secondary school

From September 1973, the course is to be extended from three to four years. It will thus be possible for more time to be devoted to general studies during the first two years; a firm commitment to a particular line of study will be delayed until the beginning of the third year. Transfers between vocational schools at the end of the second year will be possible so as to ensure that pupils' aptitudes and interests are adequately catered for.

Early leavers

Young people leaving school immediately after the nine years of compulsory schooling will be required to pursue their education for two days (formerly one day) per week. This is scheduled to take effect as from August 1974. The programme content is at present under study.

Teacher training

The teacher's socio-educative role should be emphasized as opposed to his role as a dispenser of knowledge. Special attention is to be given to training teachers so that they may be able to cope more readily with the needs of pupils, in particular the needs of the 12-16 age group. The range of the subjects offered in teacher training establishments is to be broadened. An assessment is to be made of the number of teachers likely to be needed in each discipline, and entry to training establishments will be regulated according to the envisaged needs. Part-time courses are to be made available, as from August 1974, especially for former teachers who wish to return to teaching and also for practising teachers seeking promotion.

Numerus clausus

New university entry examinations are under study. It will be recalled that the former government, which resigned in July 1972, sought power to control for a period of five years the number of students applying for entry to those faculties or institutions where the teaching resources ran the risk of being over-stretched (cf. Newsletter 1/72). This was voted by Parliament in June, but the five year period requested was reduced to two, i.e. until 1 August 1974.

37.014.3 (492) Uitleg 292, 297, 299/1972; A.A.

SCANDINAVIA : A NEW ORGANISATION FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

In January of this year the Secretariat for Nordic Cultural Co-operation began its operations in Copenhagen as the advisory and administrative body responsible for educational, cultural and scientific co-operation between the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), whoin 1971 ratified the Nordic Cultural Convention. With a staff of 19 at present, composed of nationals of all five countries, and a budget of some 42 million Danish kroner (approximately 30 million French francs), the general objectives of the Secretariat are to promote and intensify educational and cultural co-operation in order to further the development of the Nordic Cultural Community, and to lay the foundations of a joint contribution to international cultural collaboration.

The Secretariat replaces the Nordic Cultural Commission which worked for 25 years from 1947 in the fields of higher education, schools and adult education. The new body is itself divided into three sections for education, research and general cultural activities, and advisory committees in these three fields have been set up to assist the Secretariat in its work. The terms of reference of the Secretariat, as embodied in the Nordic Cultural Convention, cover all forms and stages of education and include educational aims, suject matter and materials, the structure of the educational system and the development work from which all forms of education can benefit. In accordance with the main priority stated by the Convention, i.e. the creation of the Nordic Cultural Community, the first concern of the Secretariat will be the development in each country of instruction in the language, culture and social conditions of the other Nordic countries, and the opportunities for students and citizens of one Nordic country to study and take examinations at educational institutions in the others.

The Secretariat takes up one place in a network of institutions for Nordic co-operation whose origins go back to before the last war but whose development has been greatly accelerated since 1970. Briefly, there now exists a Nordic Council, composed of parliamentary representatives, and a Nordic Council of Ministers, whose functions were defined by the 1971 revision of the Helsinki Treaty of 1962. The Nordic Cultural Convention which established the Secretariat came into being as a result of a proposal of the Nordic Council in 1970, and was ratified in 1971. Although a separate agreement, the Convention places itself within the framework of the Helsinki treaty, and the Secretariat will submit its recommendations and reports to the Nordic Council of Ministers via that body's advisory Committee of Officials. The Convention states that the Council of Ministers shall make the decisions necessary to put into effect the objectives stated in the Convention.

The Secretariat is at present drawing up a long-term and a short-term programme. In the case of education, the objectives are the establishment of common courses of study, and common educational institutions; mutual recognition of final examinations, course examinations and other certificates; co-ordination of minimum study requirements for professional qualifications; equal recognition of diplomas for the purpose of employment in all member states; and provision of courses in their own language for expatriates. Plans for the achievement of these objectives will build on the work of the Nordic Cultural Commission, which included inter-Nordic syllabuses for mathematics and English and some progress towards common recognition of diplomas. In addition, may be cited as examples of existing institutions and projects : Nordic Journalists' course; the Nordic Town and Regional Planning Institute; Nordic university courses in History, Language and Litterature; the Nordic adult education centre at Kungälv; the inter-Nordic training scheme for library, archive and information workers; and the Nordic adult education scheme. Immediate plans have been drawn up for an evaluation of the inter-Nordic syllabuses for mathematics and English, and the drawing up of similar syllabuses for another foreign language, civics and natural science. Surveys of basic education and upper secondary education in the Nordic countries will be carried out, paying special attention to development work. Other essential sectors of education, such a special education for disabled or disadvantaged children, teacher training and grading/evaluation will also be included in the programme.

A similar picture exists in the research field, where there is already a wide basis of co-operation of a spontaneous and random kind. The objectives of the Cultural Convention in this field are common research projects and institutions as well as the co-ordination of national activities, and the dissemination of research results and their operating conditions.

The intergovernmental work which will be carried out by the Secretariat forms only a part of the whole, side by side with numerous activities of a more individual or informal nature. In the field of academic research there are more than 50 inter-Nordic associations, more than 100 regular academic conferences, at least 70 scholarly periodicals receiving inter-Nordic support, and the 'Nordvision' television broadcasting arrangements. The Secretariat's programme will aim to increase the effectiveness of this widespread spontaneous action by the achievement of the major central objectives stated in the Nordic Cultural Convention.

373.574 : 37.014 (485)

Report; P.L.

SWEDEN : REFORM OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

The establishment of a system of pre-school education for all children from the age of 6 months to 7 years (the compulsory age of entry into the comprehensive school) has been recommended to the Swedish Minister for Family Affairs, Mrs. C. ODHNOFF, by the 1968 Committee for Pre-School Reform.

The report of the Committee presented in May 1972, calls for a pre-school system incorporating both the present nursery groups (daghem) and the kindergartens (lekskola). The system would eventually cater for the whole 6-months to 7 years age range, divided into two groups : 6-months - 2 1/2 years and 2 1/2 - 7. It would offer full-time education (5 hours a day) to children both of whose parents were at work or studying, and part-time (3 hours a day) to children with one parent at home. A special priority would be given to physically handicapped and socially disadvantaged children : the report urges that, as soon as possible, they be identified, contacted and offered pre-school places by the age of four at the latest.

The Committee recommends that pre-school classes should be open for 6 year olds by 1975. Facilities would become available progressively for children down to the age of 6 months. At present, 70 % of Swedish children aged 6 already receive some form of pre-school education. Younger children are nvertheless disadvantaged, statistically at least : 6,000 Swedish kronor a year is spent on the average 10-year old, as opposed to 580 kronor for the 5-year old.

Among the proposals of the Committee are :

- investigations to be carried out among families to identify, for "positive discrimination" at the pre-school level, children who are physically handicapped or psychologically, socially or linguistically disadvantaged;
- plans to be drawn up by each local authority, establishing their requirements for pre-school facilities and a strategy for satisfying these requirements;
- all plans for new housing estates to provide for pre-school accommodation and all new housing developments comprising over 200 homes to have pre-school facilities;
- among administrative arrangements, special provisions to be made for information and guidance at the local level; increased resources to be allocated to this purpose by the central authorities.

A previous report, published in the spring of 1971 ("Content and Methods for Pre-School Education") - already proposed a pre-school curriculum. To complement this the present report recommends some further research on additional training for pre-school staff; on internal organisation (grouping of children, staffing, relations between parents, staff and children); on the premises (buildings and open-air spaces); on the opening hours of the schools in relation to parents' working hours; on medical services (school-based or home visits); on the psychiatric and medical needs of pre-school groups.

If the report is accepted, the necessary legislation would be considered by the Swedish Parliament in the course of 1973.

37.014.3 : 372.3 (485)

Förskolan, betänkande avgivet av 1968 års Barnstugeutredning, SOU 26/27 Stockholm 1972; Nordisk Kontakt 11/1972; J.J. P.L.

SWEDEN : SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

In the integrated upper secondary schools which as from autumn 1971 replaced the grammar schools and the technical and vocational schools, attendance figures for the school year 1971/72 were as follows : 56.4 % of all 16 year olds have chosen one of the 17 two-year lines which have replaced technical and vocational study courses, compared with 24.8 % in the three-year "academic" course leading to higher education and 6.3 % in the four-year line preparing for the profession of engineering technician. "Non-academic" students are thus approaching a two to one majority over those of their colleagues who are aiming at university or college.

Although the largest number of students is in the three-year natural sciences line (10.6 % of all 16 year olds in 1971/72), the two-year "social", "distribution and clerical", "consumer and social service" and "technical" lines all have higher inscriptions than the three-year economics, social sciences and liberal arts lines. Altogether 87.5 % of all 16 year olds in 1971/72 continued their education in the integrated upper secondary school.

In this school, the distinctions between the various lines are much less marked than those between the traditional vocational and academic courses. All pupils follow a common core of studies : Swedish and labour market orientation are compulsory; optional general subjects, including modern languages, psychology, mathematics, music and art are available to all pupils; and the various vocational subjects all have an element of civics. These changes have greatly reduced the gap between academic and vocational studies, and the apparently marked preference for the latter indicated by the above figures should be seen in this light. This tendency has been reinforced by the fact that a considerable number of university graduates are at present unemployed or underemployed.

When almost 90 % of all 16-year olds prolong their education after the school-leaving age, Ministry of Education officials emphasise that the problem is largely one of adjusting capacity to demand, both in the upper secondary school lines, in the universities, and in the labour market. The present pattern of studies in the integrated school still largely reflects the previous upper secondary organisation and the intake capacities of the various lines are in the first stages of transition from the actual to the ideal. Ultimately they should reflect both the need for educated manpower within the different sectors of the labour market, and the students' demands for education.

Students' demands and their freedom of choice will depend to some extent on university capacity and on graduate employment opportunities. At present only five lines in the upper secondary school qualify for university study. However the Swedish Government has recently proposed a nex law, to the effect that all lines of upper secondary education should confer a general qualification for post-secondary education provided that the person concerned has also obtained a sufficient knowledge both of Swedish and English. The special requirements for entry, which may vary from one subject to another, could be obtained through the adult-education system by those who followed a line at school which did not give the required qualifications, or those who did not receive upper secondary education at all.

One of the principal aims of the integrated secondary school was to try to eliminate the social connotations attached to different courses and to make them equally attractive. For this reason the same general goals were given to all courses, and an educational and vocational guidance service was installed to help to balance the influence of home environment, parents, peer groups and mass media and to free pupils from the various social pressures. However, recent studies have shown that social and economic origins still have the decisive influence on access to a university career, and that the general education expansion has not succeeded to the extent hoped for in eliminating the differences between the social groups. It is now asked whether a more flexible system of recurrent education, with less distinct border lines between the different stages, could succeed in eliminating the economic and social inequalities inherent in the present system and at the same time make it possible to meet the future demands for education from both young people and adults.

The 1968 Educational Commission (U68) is expected to publish in early 1973 its final proposals concerning these and other questions in higher and adult education, which will have considerable importance for the character of the whole post-compulsory educational system.

373.574 : 37.014 (485) Report; P.L.

UNITED KINGDOM : EDUCATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS

That the educational priority area is a viable social and administrative unit through which to apply the principle of positive discrimination is one of the major conclusions of the first report of an action research programme under the direction of Professor A. H. HALSEY (Halsey, A.H. (ed.) : Educational Priority, EPA

Problems and Policies, Volume 1, London, HMSO 1972). The report gives a general account of research, funded jointly by the Department of Education and Science and the Social Science Research Council, which grew out of the Plowden Committee's call for an action project to put the principle of positive discrimination to the test. The work in four educational priority areas is assessed.

Pre-schooling, says the report, is the outstanding economical and effective device in the general approach to raising standards in educational priority areas. But it does not see any solutions in blanket national policies such as standardised provision for the reducing of the school starting age to four years. The type of provision has to be flexible enough to cater for the needs of individual children and particular conditions in the educational priority area. For this reason the researchers cannot envisage formal nursery education making more than a limited contribution. Instead what is advocated is a hybrid form of nursery centre - neither the expensive professionally-run nursery school nor the cheap and parent-run but amateur playgroup. The nursery centre would take the best of both. Being focused on learning, it would need professional guidance, a carefully worked out curriculum and organised links with the infant school, but at the same time it would depend on parental and local community involvement.

The report considers that much can be achieved by efficient teaching programmes in the pre-school centre and that teaching should have some formal content. The researchers found evidence in one of the educational priority areas under study that gains made during the pre-school years were maintained in the reception year. "In fact, in certain cases where groups had made limited progress in the nursery, they made substantial progress in their first year of infant school."

The idea of the community school emerges with new dynamism in the report. "The community school seeks almost to obliterate the boundary between school and community, to turn the community into a school and the school into a community." The community should have ample resources - both human and financial - to encourage parents to join in the educational process. One necessity according to the report, is an annual public relations grant of £ 150 or & O.5O per capita, whichever is the greater, to be spent on publications, exhibitions and minor site improvement. Another is an educational force which can go into the home.

One of the main resources is still the class teacher, and the educational priority area projects did succeed in improving the morale of teachers. The special salary increment for teachers in educational priority area schools, while approved by the profession in principle, dit not, however, make any discernable impact on the schools. So, while advocating an increase in remuneration for educational priority area teachers, the report wants courses introduced which will lead to a qualification enabling such teachers to earn a higher annual increment.

Action research can, the report concludes, be an effective method of policy formation and practical innovation, despite possible conflicts between social science and policy interests.

It is interesting to compare the findings of the Halsey report with those of the comprehensive study which came out at approximately the same time and was carried out in the U.S.A. by a team at Harvard University led by Professor C. JENCKS. This study indicates that the type and quality of education given to a child has only a marginal effect on his or her success in examinations or ultimate earning ability. According to Professor Jencks, inequality in educational opportunity is not responsible for most of the inequality in educational results. Qualitative differences between schools have little long-term effect on pupils. The important factor is the characteristics of the children as they enter school. Professor Jencks calculates that genetic factors account for about 45 % of inequality in IQ test scores, and environmental factors for about 35 %.

37.014.5 (41-4) The Times, 9-IX-1972; Education, 6-X-1972; W.F.

UNITED KINGDOM : A UNIVERSITY UNDER SCRUTINY

A new system of university government, which improves participation by staff and students at all levels and removes the "autocratic" powers of heads of department and the supreme academic power of the senate is proposed in a report on Birmingham University. The report is the result of over 18 months' work by a review

body, established by the university council, under the chairmanship of Mr. Jo GRIMOND, former leader of the Liberal Party. It was established following the student unrest and subsequent sit-in of 1968, with a direction to "consider the role, constitution and functioning of the University of Birmingham and to make recommendations to the Council for any desirable changes."

Participation : The report acknowledges that all who can claim to be members of the university have a right to share in its governance, but points out that all members cannot take part at every level in the decision making process. The review body regards as a matter of overriding importance, substantial participation at department and faculty levels, where decisions which most concern staff and students are chiefly taken. The department should remain the basic unit of organisation in the university, but the head of the department should be chairman rather than chief executive. He should carry final responsibility for performance, function and finance of the department within guidelines to general policy decided by a departmental committee. It should be standard university practice for a head to work through such a committee, which should consist of approximately 12 elected members of the teaching staff, together with one representative of the research staff, one student representative for each year or division of the department, and one post-graduate student.

Administration : In the higher reaches of university government, the review body recommends that ultimate authority should lie with the university council. A council of 30 members is recommended drawn both from the laity and the academics, but with the balance in favour of the academics. It should make statutes, ordinances and regulations and have final responsibility for all academic and business matters. The senate should comprise academics and students. Its functions should be to consider broad policy and to make recommendations to the council to which it should elect some members.

Teaching : To ensure that teaching is effective and of high quality, proper weight should be given to teaching ability in making academic appointments and promotions. Account should be taken of student views, and university lecturers should be expected as a natural and normal requirement to undergo a course imparting teaching skills. Every undergraduate should be taught at least once in each week in a small group by a permanent full-time member of the teaching staff. The duty of the teaching staff in regard to the individual student should not be restricted to a specialised discipline. A university is more than the aggregate of the disciplines taught within it and needs to be continuously concerned about the inter-disciplinary and intra-disciplinary relationships essential to a wider culture, both for students and staff. Increasing use should be made of educational technology with a view to the better utilisation of staff time, a factor which will grow increasingly important as the university student numbers grow, probably with some decrease in staff/student ratio.

Curriculum : The report accepts that undergraduate courses tend to be over-specialised but argues that this does not justify a move to general studies or a reduction in the content of courses leading to professional qualifications. It also rejects a common first year as being scarcely justifiable if it requires lengthening the first degree course by an additional year since the cost of this additional year would be hard to defend in the light of other social needs. "It would be far more effective were the student to return from time to time for short periods throughout his working life."

Examinations : Examinations and assessments should be continued, though there should be an investigation into the possibility of effecting changes in the methods used. The review body considers that there is considerable value in three-hour sessional examinations, particularly as these may most effectively be assessed by external examiners who can ensure that standards are maintained and students' interests protected.

Research : The university should make the most of opportunities that may arise for attracting new research activities. Possible examples are tendering for local authority research work or the development of projects involving collaboration with universities in Europe or other parts of the world. The university should review those research projects in which falling funds and the development of rigid contracts may adversely affect the research and careers of those who carry it out.

Women in the university : The report notes a disproportionate lack of enrolment by women students, of appointments of women to university posts and of membership by women of university committees. The review body recommends that half or part-time appointments should be developed for young married women who wish to continue academic work and bring up families, and also that day nursery facilities for students with young children be extended to staff with young families.

Role of the university : The university should foster a capacity for critical analysis, intellectual scepticism and constructive, imaginative synthesis; assist the growth of personal maturity and the ability to assume responsibility for moral choice; contribute to the educational and general well-being of the community through the application of knowledge and by encouraging creativity. This will entail involvement in philosophical, religious and political issues, but a university cannot stand aside from the moral issues and problems of society.

"We believe that the universities have their part to play in the discovery, ventilation and criticism of new political and social ideas. Above all, they should be in the forefront in producing men and women who have the will and capacity to lead the changes in our constantly evolving society."

378.122 (41-8) The Times Higher Education Supplement, 22/29-IX-1972; W.F.R.

UNITED KINGDOM : SLOWING DOWN IN THE MOVE TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

The most significant finding of the latest study, sponsored jointly by the National Foundation for Educational Research and the Department of Education and Science, on comprehensive and selective secondary systems is that there has been a marked slowing down in the process of reorganisation (HILL, C.L. : Transfer at Eleven, Slough, NFER, 1972). The major change to comprehensive education which was forecast in 1968, has not materialised. This is not to say that there has been a complete change of direction, for there has been a considerable increase in the number of Local Education Authorities (LEA) that have abolished selection procedures in at least part of their areas and a rise in the number that have some comprehensive schools. The general picture at present shows, 30 LEAs which do not operate any selection procedure at the age of 11 ; 56 which operate a selection procedure in part of their area; and 55 which operate selection procedures in the whole of their area. The research shows that 64 % of the age group is still undergoing selection for secondary education.

According to the study the all-through 11-18 comprehensive school is widely accepted as the simplest solution. The type of system which has gained most in popularity is the middle school three-tier system, with transfer at age 8-9 and again at 12-13 (nineteen LEAs as against eight in 1968). The number of LEAs using a sixth form college system has gone up from eight to twelve.

It is clear that there has been no move towards homogeneity. Not only is there considerable divergence of practice between one LEA and another, but there are authorities which themselves have a mixture of systems. Of those LEAs which have selective systems coexisting with non-selective ones, the majority do not allow any transfer of children between catchment areas.

Those LEAs which operate selective systems tend to rely heavily on verbal reasoning tests, but there has been an increasing emphasis on teacher assessments. At the same time there is an upward trend towards oral reporting by teachers in 11 - selection procedures (very few LEAs now interview the pupils). As for arithmetic and English attainment tests, they are much less used than in the past.

Asked about future policy, nearly half the LEAs replied that they had no plans for comprehensive reorganisation. Of the rest 15 replied that they intended to go totally comprehensive. A further 40 intended only to increase the number of their comprehensive schools. It seems likely, therefore, that by 1976 the number of LEAs which have dispensed with selection will have risen only to 64 of the 161 considered in the survey).

378.583 (41-8) *Education*, 22-IX-1972;
The Times Educational Supplement, 22-IX-1972; W.F.R.

UNITED KINGDOM : EXTENDING THE OPEN UNIVERSITY'S RANGE

In January 1974 the Open University will admit, on an experimental basis, 500 18-year-olds to the normal part-time degree courses now taken by those over 21 years of age.

Dr. Walter PERRY, the vice-chancellor, has made it clear that the Open University is not on the verge of becoming largely an institution for school leavers. (The Open University does offer considerable financial saving in comparison with traditional forms of higher education, cf. Newsletter 3/72). The University has maintained that its chief task is to provide for the mature student and for adult refresher courses, and that its main contribution to the rest of higher education will be the development of new teaching methods and materials and the promotion of interchangeability of credits to make possible new combinations of full and part-time education. It made no secret of the fact that it was opposed to taking in 18-year-olds if they were to be regarded as a distraction from its main responsibilities to older students.

Dr. Perry anticipated that the 500 students would be selected according to different types so that information could be gathered not only about likely demand but also about the types most likely to succeed. So far it has been decided that 250 of the students will have an Advanced Level qualification, and that 250 will not. The experiment will last for two years with the possibility of extension if it proves to be successful.

Discussions have also been going on concerning schemes for collaboration between the Open University and polytechnics, colleges of education and other universities. One of the most significant is the possibility of joint degree courses on a modular basis and the development of transferable credits between the Open University and other institutions. It has been recognised that such collaboration could be to the benefit of all parties concerned. The Open University's teaching materials and techniques could supplement the work of the "conventional" institutions, while they could help the Open University especially with laboratory facilities, seminars and tutoring.

378.018.43 : 378(41-4) — The Times Educational Supplement, 7-VII-1972; The Times Higher Education Supplement, 20-X-1972; W.F.B.

UNITED KINGDOM : ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

The belief that truancy is an important factor in juvenile delinquency led the Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency (Scotland) to set up a working party to study the problem of absenteeism from school.

The working party based its report on a survey of primary and secondary schools in Glasgow during two sample weeks (the first week in October 1970 and the last week in February 1971). The survey covered some 150,000 children.

There were two broad categories of absence : acceptable (illness, legitimate absence) and unacceptable (possible truancy, definite truancy, no reason given). The average absenteeism rate was 10,2 %. This is roughly the national average and is a figure which has remained remarkably steady in the 100 years during which statistics have been collected.

The overall truancy rate for the weeks concerned was 1,3 %. This involved at least 2,000 children per day and could easily involve a much higher number since the percentage did not differentiate between the occasional truant and the persistent hard-core defaulter. Comprehensive and junior secondary schools showed the highest truancy rates, and in both types of school truancy accounted for almost one in five of all absences, while in primary schools it accounted for less than one in fifteen. According to the survey, truancy is more prevalent amongst boys than girls, with a peak being reached in the 14-15 age group.

371.82 (41-4) — The Scottish Educational Journal, 27-X-1972; W.F.B.

UNITED KINGDOM : UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Statistics compiled by the Publishers' Association show that in 1968-69 university libraries in the United Kingdom spent over £2,323,000 on books and over £1,478,000 on periodicals. On average the university libraries spent £10.25 on books and £6.55 on periodicals per student (undergraduates + postgraduates). In the case of expenditure on books the extremes were £24.00 and £0.25 and in the case of periodicals £22.90 and £0.10. The wide variations may, to a certain extent, be explained by the fact that some universities offer a narrow range of subjects and that others are making a special effort to build up their libraries. Among the long established universities Oxford spent per student £15.80 on books and £9.95 on periodicals; London £9.95 and £8.35; St. Andrews £15.60 and £7.85.

The findings of the Publishers' Association confirm a trend which is now worrying many librarians - that expenditure on periodicals is taking up so much of the budget that there is little left for books.

The outcome of a recent dispute between the Publishers' Association and the University of Hull over the right of public access to university libraries could have far-reaching implications for the role such libraries play. Under an agreement worked out in 1927 the Publishers' Association granted licences to universities enabling them to buy new books published in Britain at a 10 % discount, the libraries agreeing to the principle of public access. In 1963 the Association said it would withdraw all licences unless the libraries displayed a notice informing the public of its rights. A number of libraries protested, and a modified statement by the Association was generally taken by the librarians to mean that access should be granted to those engaged in research, for example teachers or individuals engaged in some private research project.

Recently students from colleges of education, polytechnics and the Open University, aware of the existence of the licences, have been seeking permission to use university library facilities. At Hull the librarian has made the point that the university's facilities are already cramped, and that without an increase in grant from the University Grants Committee an unfair burden would be placed on the university, if its library were to be required to cater for the general public. The Publishers' Association has, however, confirmed that by "public access" it did include everyone. The view has been expressed that, as in 1963, certain universities may choose to give up their licences in order to preserve full control over the use to which their libraries may be put.

378.162.2 (41-4)

The Times Higher Education Supplement, 18-VIII-1972; 27-X-1972; W.F.B.